The Task Force in Information and Broadcasting Ministry has already undertaken short term media campaign. The materials prepared by the Ministry with assistance from UNICEF, after approval of the Task Force, are appearing in print and visual media. A comprehensive long term media plan in consultation with Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity has been drawn up. The plan covers both electronic and print media which would run throughout the year.

Travel advisory, do's and don'ts and other pertinent information has been widely published to alley fear ad avoid panic. Media is kept informed on daily basis.

The pandemic preparedness and response calls for actions in sectors beyond health. National Disaster Management Authority has issued guidelines for such actions.

Government is fully geared up to deal with the situation.

Hijacking of train

*26. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that unauthorized person/persons drove a local train that was later involved in a head-on collision with a train coming from opposite side near Chennai on 29 April, 2009;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of casualties and damages;

(d) the amount of compensation paid to all those who suffered;

(e) whether it was an act of terrorism; and

(f) the action taken against Railway staff, whose negligence caused the hijack of the train?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE): (a) to (f) Yes, Sir. As per the Preliminary Report of the statutory inquiry conducted by the Commission of Railway Safety, Southern Circle, the accident was caused due to an unknown person taking control of an Electrical Multiple Unit (EMU) Rake which was available on Platform No. 14 at Chennai Moore Market Complex awaiting schedule departure at 5.15 hours on 29th April, 2009. Before the booked crew could reach the respective Cabin of the Electrical Multiple Unit Rake, the unknown person started the engine of the Electrical Multiple Unit at 04.58 hours, entered the wrong line accelerating at a very high speed of 85-90 kilometer per hour and collided at Vysarpadi Jeeva Station with a goods train which was standing at the station due to signal being red. Identify of the person who had taken the Electrical Multiple Unit is yet to be established. The investigation has been entrusted to CB-CID of Tamil Nadu, the report of which is awaited.

As a result of the accident, 4 persons lost their lives, 6 persons suffered grievous injuries and 6 persons suffered simple injuries. Total cost of damage to the Railway in this accident is about Rs. 3.13 crore.

Compensation is paid only after a decree is awarded on a claim filed in this regard in the Railway Claims Tribunal. So far, no compensation claim has been filed in the tribunal. However, *ex-gratia* has been paid to the next of kin of the deceased and injured passengers as per rules.

The preliminary report of the Commissioner of Railway Safety does not indicate any act of terrorism. Necessary action will be taken against the defaulting staff after receipt of final inquiry report of the Commission of Railway Safety.

Modernization of railway stations

*27. SHRI N. BALAGANGA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has proposed to modernize railway stations into world class standard;

(b) if so, the details of the plan and the stations earmarked for the modernization; and

(c) whether any target has been fixed for its completion?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE): (a) to (c) The details are being worked out and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Production of sugar

*28. SHRI K.E. ISMAIL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the production of sugar has considerably gone down during the year 2008-09 compared to previous years resulting in high rise in prices of sugar in the market; and

(b) if so, the reasons for decrease in the production and steps being taken to encourage cultivation of sugarcane and sugar production in the country?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Yes, Sir. The production of sugar during current sugar season 2008-09 (October-September) is estimated to be lower as compared to last three years' production. Lower production of sugar has put pressure on prices of sugar in the market.

(b) The production of sugar during the current sugar season 2008-09 has been low mainly due to decrease in area under sugarcane, reduction in cane yield, higher diversion of sugarcane for the manufacture of Jiggery (Gur) and Khandsari and fall in recovery rate. The Government has taken the following steps to encourage cultivation of sugarcane and increase sugar production in the country:-